

■ Depression In-Service

You can hardly overdo the amount of information staff receives on depression. Depression (and its impact) frequently robs students of a golden opportunity and leads to unnecessary terminations from Job Corps. Suicide is also a possibility with severely depressed students, and suicide prevention can be part of everyone's job description. An entire in-service can be built around the "Views on Depression and Suicide" handout. You can have this survey passed around on center ahead of time if you'd prefer, and present the tallied results at the in-service. You can distribute the survey to 20 students and 20 staff, and compare the group answers in a training, looking at differences. Each of the 11 True-False questions can lead to a mini-lecture and group discussion at the training. Be sure that everyone in the training answers item #12, and perhaps you can go around the room and have each participant in the training read his/her answer. "Signs of Depression in Job Corps Students" and "Danger Signs in Students" are valuable handouts for staff to assist with suicide prevention at Job Corps. Feel free to print and copy, but we ask that you keep the author's reference at the bottom of the page.



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Views on Depression and Suicide

We should seriously consider terminating a current student if they:

1. Have to start taking anti-depressants T F
2. Attempt suicide T F
3. Are hospitalized briefly for depression T F
4. Say that they sometimes have suicidal thoughts
but add that "I would never do it"..... T F
- 5 I believe that we will always have occasional attempts
on Center. T F
6. I am scared by the idea of having to deal with a very
depressed student. T F
7. I am scared by the idea of having to deal with a suicidal
student. T F
8. There is a current student about whose safety I am concerned. T F
9. I have had a student tell me he (she) is suicidal. T F
10. Students are more likely to tell other students about suicide than
tell staff. T F
11. I'm afraid I would say the wrong thing to a student who is suicidal...T F
12. Something we can do to further protect our students from serious
depression & suicide is:

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Signs of Depression in Students

- Changes in mood (more irritable, angry, sad)
- No longer participates in center activities he previously enjoyed
- Weight gain or loss. May include changes in her cafeteria patterns
- Sleeping too much or irregular sleep- missing early classes
- Falling asleep in class
- Drop in classroom performance
- No longer “hangs out” with other students
- More IR’s
- Long-term lack of progress in vocation
- Failed room scores
- Poor hygiene

A depressed student needs to know that the pain will get better someday.

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Danger Signs in Students

- Frequently mentions the subject of death
- Severely withdrawn
- Abruptly discussing termination
- Student States: “I don’t care what happens to me”; “I don’t care if I get kicked out”; “It doesn’t matter”; “The staff doesn’t care if I’m dead or alive”
- Giving away possessions
- Inability of student to make changes in the behaviors noted in top section
- An eeriness in mood (departure from previous mood)